

VZCZCXRO8407
RR RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH
DE RUEHBD #0049 0720715
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 130715Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4450
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0094
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0084
RUEHGVA/USMISSION GENEVA 0095

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 000049

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/MTS/COPPOLAMG, PRM/ANE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/12/2014
TAGS: [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [BM](#) [BX](#)
SUBJECT: BRUNEI DISTANCING ITSELF FROM ROHINGYA ISSUE

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission John McIntyre, Reasons 1.4 (b A
ND d)

BRUNEI NOT LIKELY TO ENGAGE ON ROHINGYA REFUGEE ISSUE

11. (SBU) Deputy Chief of Mission met with Brunei Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to discuss Brunei's position regarding the Rohingya refugee issue. Reading primarily from a prepared text, MFA Deputy Director, Politics I, Haji Mulok Jamat, stated that the Brunei's position is this is an issue best solved with the larger ASEAN forum. However, he followed up by saying that within ASEAN, Brunei believes that this is primarily a Burmese issue. The Burmese must work with Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia on any resettlement issues. Mulok also noted that Brunei thinks that Bangladesh must also play a role given what Brunei views are their long standing historical ties with the Rohingya. When pressed if Brunei sees any reasons (political, cultural, religious) to take a more active role in this issue, Mulok stated unequivocally no. Mulok did state that Brunei would like to see a peaceful settlement to the issue but offer little more in terms of a substantive response.

12. (C) COMMENT: Mulok stuck to the script and it is obvious that Brunei has little interest in participation in the Rohingya refugee issue. Mulok did make a slightly unexpected observation regarding the Burmese government and stated the Burmese government should do a better job of recognizing Rohingya's rights and legal status. While an opinion held by some in the MFA, this unscripted comment would likely not be repeated verbatim in a larger forum. However, it does offer a shred of hope of Brunei's support for greater recognition of the Rohingya if the Brunei believed that this was an opinion supported by others in ASEAN. Mulok also focused much of the discussion on the historical connections between Bangladesh, the Rohingya, and Burma. He said Rohingya's have no cultural/ethnic connections with Brunei as well as limited religious ties. End Comment
TODD